

1 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Let's begin with Dr. Eades.

2 DR. EADES: Good morning, Chairperson James and
3 distinguished panel members. I want to talk just a moment about
4 treatment of pathological gambling; however, I think a caveat is
5 in need as I begin.

6 Pathological gambling implies there's such a
7 condition as normal gambling which further implies that gambling
8 is acceptable behavior on behalf of the general population.
9 Well, these implications have been fostered by various state
10 governments with the underlying rationalizations that gambling
11 revenues allow for more services to be delivered to its citizens.

12 We have moved from a position where gambling was
13 illegal in most states to a situation where gambling is condoned
14 and promoted. While it may be true that we cannot legislate
15 morality, the consequences of gambling problems beg the question
16 of whether we have legislated some type of immorality. Current
17 levels of gambling addiction indicate a problem of perhaps
18 epidemic proportions, with subsequent damage to the individual,
19 the family and society in general.

20 The problem I see with implying that gambling is
21 normal, acceptable behavior is that it undermines the only sure
22 preventive measure that I know of to ensure an individual will
23 not become addicted to gambling, and that particular measure is
24 simply never to gamble. However, if a person is already
25 gambling, then early detection and intervention regarding the
26 potential problem is as valuable as it is in the treatment of
27 physical disease.

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1 Most casinos issue player's cards which are then used
2 by the gambler to accumulate points that can be redeemed for cash
3 and comps. For example, a player card may be inserted into a
4 slot machine where a computer record is kept that indicates date,
5 time played, and money taken in or paid out by the machine.
6 Obviously, those that spend the most money gambling receive
7 better comps from the casinos and are on special mailing lists
8 for casino promotions.

9 When I work with some who is gambling addicted, I
10 have him or her request printouts from the casinos they frequent.
11 Usually if a person requests these printouts for tax purposes,
12 there is no problem in obtaining them. These printouts are very
13 useful for dissipating the patient's denial as they allow the
14 progression of the addiction to be objectified. The patients can
15 see what dates they gambled, how long they gambled, and how much
16 money was won or lost. It is very dramatic when a patient sees
17 the progression from four days of gambling per month to 19, from
18 20 hours per month to 150 hours of gambling, and from losing \$175
19 to \$3,000 per month.

20 If we extrapolate this concept, it seems to me that
21 the casinos would truly be doing a great preventive service by
22 sending their preferred gambling customers printouts of their
23 gambling behavior patterns with each mailing. I do believe this
24 would have an impact on earlier recognition of an impending
25 gambling problem and could bring reality to bear in a most
26 forceful manner on the recipient.

27 As regards treatment, I concur with Henry James, the
28 famed Harvard psychologist who said that permanent behavior

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1 change only comes from having a spiritual transformation. From
2 20 years of working with alcohol an drug addicted individuals and
3 observing them over time, I've found that those who had the
4 healthiest recovery were those who returned to active
5 participation in a church and a firm belief in God.

6 It is true that I have seen many addicts recover from
7 their primary addiction who do not develop their spirituality.
8 Unfortunately, most of them become addicted to something else,
9 while the quality of their lives, as well as their basic
10 character, was not significantly altered.

11 The gambling addict needs tools for living. In our
12 society, these tools were forged on the amble of Christianity.
13 Honesty, service, simplicity, responsibility, self denial,
14 perseverance, tolerance, reverence, faith, wisdom, and love of
15 oneself, neighbor and God provides the necessary tools to build a
16 new and healthy life for the gambling addict.

17 Gambling addicts are broke and broken; I know this
18 for certain. Therapy and support groups are necessary but not
19 sufficient. To deny the very real and awesome power of spiritual
20 transformation in the recovery process is perhaps the greatest
21 denial any addict or therapist must overcome.

22 I had a good trip getting here last night. I
23 borrowed a car to get here; I had a friend of mine call and make
24 the reservation on his credit card, and the reason why is that I
25 am a recovering gambling addict. My life has literally been
26 destroyed economically. I will never be able to retire, I'm
27 currently in bankruptcy, I'm a Chapter 13, and I do live from
28 payday to payday. Economic impact has been tremendous; economic

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1 consequences are such that I lost the extent of five years gross
2 salary gambling.

3 Like anybody else, I believe that gambling addiction
4 is like alcoholism or any other addiction is an accidental
5 illness that nobody plans on happening to them, and the only sure
6 way to make sure it doesn't happen to you is never gamble.

7 I have seen the horror of watching my wife attempt
8 suicide by taking an overdose of Xanax, and I have taken her to
9 the hospital and I sit there as the police come and make their
10 mandatory suicide report, and I see the shame and hurt and
11 numbness in her.

12 I have grown children who have called upon me in the
13 last several months with some help with some medical problems,
14 and I have no money to be able to help them, and as a father I'm
15 ashamed of that. I have 15 credit cards which I ran up; I sold
16 cars, boats, motors, guns, you name it, in order to support my
17 addiction.

18 I understand the gambling addict: I know what it's
19 like for your car to go faster as you cross the bridge into
20 Biloxi; I know what it's like to fill up your gas tank in your
21 car because you know when you finish gambling there will be no
22 money for gas; I know what it's like to sit playing slot machines
23 all day long and not eat and getting up only rarely to go relieve
24 myself because that's what gambling addicts do; I know what it's
25 like to put your credit cards and your money in the trunk of your
26 car and only take in \$200 in cash and when you lose that you go
27 back out and unlock the trunk of the car.

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1 Gambling addicts are broke but they're also broken.
2 Emotional pain has been the hardest thing that I know of -- for
3 me. I have seen what all I've worked for for over 30 years of my
4 marriage destroyed; I have no economic security; I have hurt the
5 people that I love.

6 And you know, even after I went public with my
7 gambling addiction -- which was not a very popular decision in
8 many places; people wanted me to keep quiet about it -- I would
9 go into casinos and gamble even after my name was in the paper
10 and after my picture was in the paper, and never, not once, has
11 anyone in any casino ever said to me, Do you have a gambling
12 problem?

13 I would say to you that if our states are so crippled
14 financially that they have to support themselves by straddling
15 the shattered souls of problem gamblers and their families, then
16 I submit to you that I see nothing at all on the horizon except
17 more heartache for the citizens of each state. Thank you very
18 much.

19 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you, Dr. Eades.

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